Radha, Krishna and the beautiful gopis

In the beautiful realm of Goloka, Krishna and Radha indulge in many a Leela. Radha is a part of Krishna. Yet, she is unable to share Krishna with her other gopis. But Krishna is Krishna. He creates mystic beauty even in the midst of Radha's ire and jealousy…

Ganga

Ganga, the goddess of fluids, flows through both Radha and Krishna. She, Ganga, exquisitely beautiful, shy and demure, falls in love with Krishna, the minute she is born and waits in eager anticipation for his loving embrace.

Radhika, with her uncanny intuition, arrives out of the blue just then and sees Ganga quivering with desire for Krishna. Radha is unable to control her jealousy. She knows that like her other gopis, Ganga, her own daughter too, cannot control her love for Krishna. And, Radha wants Krishna for herself. Only for herself.

The other gopis stand at a safe distance quaking with fear. They are familiar with Radha's wrath. And feel sorry for Ganga. But they also know that their Lord, Krishna will, as usual, find a way to love all of them in his own infinitely unique ways.

Krishna watches Radha's wrath with amusement. He cannot live without her. So he gazes at her with utmost love and devotion and starts singing hymns in her praise. Radha's gopis sigh with relief when they see Ganga singing along with Krishna. But they can see her shaking with fright too. They wait with bated breath…

Radha looks at Krishna icily and says, “I have seen you dallying around with my gopis in the past too Krishna. Tell me Krishna - is my love flawed that you seek the company of other gopis, who are my own sakhis? You hurt me with your actions Krishna, yet you always have your way with me and with my gopis too. Why Krishna Why? Don’t you feel guilty for betraying me?” Krishna looks at her as if in a trance…but does not say a word.

Viraja

Radha says, “I saw you holding that gopi Viraja in your arms in Chandana Vana. I knew you loved her too. Yet, she transformed into a river and vanished right before our eyes the minute I stepped into that cool Vana. She loves you. She always will. So she flows in Goloka even today chanting your name all through the day and night.

And you Krishna, even as I stood beside you, cried so piteously for Viraja that she emerged as a Siddhi Yogini before you. You were so delighted to see her again. And right in front of me you asked her to be the mother of your children. She agreed of course. For how could anyone refuse you, Krishna? And today her children flow as the seven seas on Prithvi Loka, a reminder of how intensely you loved Viraja.

I forgave you that day Krishna, only because my other gopis begged me to do so. Viraja will always be by you now. And that gladdens your heart, doesn’t it, Krishna?”

Shobha

“Soon you moved on to your next conquest. This time I caught you red-handed with my gopi, Shobha. I could see the fervour in your bodies and the radiant smiles on your faces. And what did Shobha do when she saw me standing behind you? She left her body and rose to Chandra Mandala instantly.

Krishna’s Shobha can be found on the faces of women and in young leaves, plants, flowers and ripe fruits.

And you, Krishna wanted her too to be near you always. So you, smartly gave some of her coolness to Soma, the moon and then spread her soft light to gold, pearls, the faces of women, the bodies of kings, palaces and temples and in young leaves, plants, flowers and ripe fruits. You got what you wanted, again, by working in your own unique way, didn’t you, Krishna?”

Prabha

“Before I could even recover from your rendezvous with Shobha, I found you with Prabha, another sakhi of mine. And this time, you vanished before my eyes. Prabha fearing my wrath flew to the Sun. But I could hear you moaning for her repeatedly. You wanted to be close to her. Always. So you dispersed some of her lustre in fire, in the brilliance of Brahamans, Devas, Vaishnavas, learned men and women, serpents and rishis. That way you could always see her, Krishna, couldn’t you?”

Shanti

“And after Prabha it was Shanti. I was deeply hurt when I caught you in the most intimate of moments with Shanti,

Krishna. And before I could even express my hurt, you vanished. Again. As usual.

Like the rest, Shanti too abandoned her physical body the moment she set eyes on me. You were invisible to all, Krishna. Yet I saw you absorbing Shanti into your body. You then spread Shanti's soothing energies into the forests, gifted a part of her energy to Brahma, Lakshmi, Dharma and devout people who worship you with mantras. And then you did the most unthinkable thing. You gifted a big chunk of Shanti to me too.

It is Shanti that makes you sit so serenely beside me now. And I know it is because I have utmost faith in you that Shanti resides within me too now."

Kshama

"But when I saw you with Kshama something snapped within me. I took away your Pitambara, flute, Vanamala and your Kaustubha that you had discarded to be with her. For a fleeting moment, I was thrilled to see you cry like a demented person. Yet, I gave back all that belonged to you and forgave you because my gopis made me see reason.

But your body turned black forever for the sin you committed that day. Kshama was ashamed of what had happened to you. But you Krishna, loved Kshama, who was forgiveness, so much that you gave her a big place in Vishnu's heart, distributed her sattvic energies amongst his bhaktas, Dharma, the devout, scholars and also the weak."

Ganga

“And today, this gopi Ganga sits beside you. What am I to make of all this, Krishna?” Before Krishna could reply to Radha, Ganga, who had witnessed Radha’s tirade, transformed herself into a river using her Siddhi Yoga.

Radha is so enraged with Ganga that she promises to drink all her waters in a single gulp. But Ganga hides herself in Krishna’s blue feet. Radha looks for her in all the fourteen lokas. But does not find her. She sits down beside Krishna in a huff and pauses to catch her breath.

Meanwhile, when Ganga, the Devi of life giving waters, vanishes from Goloka, all the creatures on Prithvi perish. Those who survive are unable to quench their thirst. All the devas fly to Goloka and inform Krishna about their sorry plight.

Krishna says, “If you want Ganga to flow through earth again, worship Radha, not me. She alone can remove Ganga’s fears.”

The devas look at Radha who is sitting next to Krishna. They say,“O Devi Radha, have you forgotten your past? Recall the day when you heard and loved Shiva’s song so much that you transformed yourself into his music and flowed as Ganga in the Raasa Mandala.

Devi, Ganga is your own daughter. Allow her to flow through Prithvi and unite with Varuna who is her husband in that realm. Let her live as Vishnu’s consort in Vaikuntha, Shiva’s in Kailasa and as your daughter in Goloka. We will teach Ganga the Radha mantra and she will worship you with it. ”Radha smiled at Krishna and all the devas and said, “So be it.”

The next instant Ganga emerges from the toes of Krishna’s feet. Brahma fills his kamandalu with her waters so that he never goes thirsty again. Shiva keeps a part of it in his jata. And then Brahma teaches Ganga the Radha strotra, covers her with the Radha Kavacha, the subtle armour of protection that spins around the Radha mantra. Ganga worships her mother, Radha and flows through Shivaloka, Vaikuntha, Prithvi and Goloka simultaneously forever. And because she once emerges from Krishna’s blue feet, she is also known as Vishnu Paadi Ganga.

This beautiful story tells us how we can find Krishna in our lives. If we nurture Kshama, we find Shanti. Prabha and Shobha flow into our bodies naturally after that. Viraja as Yamuna fills our hearts with Bhakti and Ganga cleanses our sins and connects us to Krishna.